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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on how to develop a community-based educational intervention when community apathy is present, or where the isolation between school and community makes partnership more difficult. The key elements for this model are three steps: (1) determining the school-community relationship, establishing that a condition of isolation precludes a school-based model of integrated services; (2) determining community needs and available resources, including educational needs and resources, in a planning matrix; and (3) developing a community organizing strategy that builds on available resources and leverages others. This model was developed in a particular school-community setting, a public housing project in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) in an area of extreme poverty and deprivation. Steps of the model were applied, and strategies have been developed to put a community-based integrated services model into place at the housing project. Two approaches that have been implemented in housing projects are suggested as transferable to the Philadelphia setting. One, Project LOOK, has been implemented in a Seattle (Washington) site where educational facilities have been located in units of the housing project. The other has been developed by Texas A & M University for communities along the Texas-Mexico border. It uses local women to promote and explain the services available. These two program successes suggest that a community school is achieved through combining a community-oriented perspective that sees education as a fundamental component of community development. Two appendixes contain data about one of the schools and examples of linked practices at work in several settings. (Contains 44 references.) (SLD)

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Laboratory for Student Success

ED 419 068

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A Model for Organizing Community Based Educational Support Services

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The research reported herein was supported in part by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the U.S. Department of Education through a contract to the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) established at the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education (CRHDE), and in part by CRHDE. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position of the supporting agencies, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

Introduction

Educators have long recognized that successful educational programs are facilitated by strong community and family supports. Accordingly, while many school reforms target improved standards, better texts, stronger academic and other support staff, or more effective pedagogy, the challenge facing many poor performing schools and school districts is broader still. In addition to educational supports, a positive future for these schools lies in the reintegration of education within the community's value system and the integration of family support services with educational outreach efforts. As a new work on the topic puts it, there is a need for "community schools"—schools that reach into the community and provide "safe passages" for children (Dryfoos, 1998).

While the literature on educational change includes many examples in which family and children's support services are integrated within the school, this paper extends the logic of service integration to another level. This paper considers communities with educational problems in which *traditional school based efforts are unlikely to work*, because the schools themselves are both socially and spatially isolated from their children. In addition, we consider a situation all too common in urban areas: that the community itself lacks a sense of purpose that includes the education of children as a primary value.

This model should be considered as appropriate when the two central assumptions of public education are violated: that communities are socially and spatially isolated from their schools, and when the community has no apparent commitment to its children's education. The model proposed in this paper is based on a combination of an empirical case study of the Passyunk Homes housing project in Philadelphia, as well as on efforts made at other communities of isolation, urban and rural, and reported in a variety of sources.

The strategies suggested here consist of placing education within a broader set of neighborhood needs, using a community organizing strategy to re-establish the priority of education within those needs, and integrating educational goals within a new model of community based service delivery that will

either support existing educational reform efforts, or supplant them with radically different approaches to educational service delivery. Put simply, in some communities *the locus for educational change is within a broader community change agenda.* Without that change, education will continue to be deligitimated and isolated from the community; without education being included in the agenda for community change, the community will not develop a sustainable future.

The approach spelled out here focuses on how to develop a community based educational intervention when community apathy is present, or where the isolation between school and community makes a partnership more difficult. The key elements for this model are three steps: (1) determining the school-community relationship, establishing that a condition of isolation precludes a school-based model of integrated services; (2) determining community needs and available resources, including educational needs and resources, in a planning matrix; and (3) developing a community organizing strategy that builds on available resources and leverages others.

When Schools and Communities Separate

This project addresses a central issue in the relationship of schools to their community base: What strategy should educators adopt when the community base for a school is so diminished in its resources that its students are condemned to repeating the poverty of their parents and significant limits to their daily activities and future chances? Educators are often held to standards based on unrealistic expectations of their potential impact on students' lives (Kozol, 1967). Many critics of American schools cite their failure to overcome significant problems facing the children of economically disadvantaged and/or isolated communities, without recognizing the limits of the school as an institution. While schools are a common element in many children's lives, they are a relatively limited part of the daily routine for a large number of children and adolescents.

What should educators' responses be when asked to develop an educational intervention strategy in such a school/community context? In recent years, one approach has been to recognize the limits of educational services by adopting a strategy of coordination across a variety of human services (Driscoll,

Boyd, & Crowson, 1995; Kirst, Koppich, & Kelley, 1997; Kagan, 1997). In this approach, needed social, psychological and public health services are coordinated around or near the school building in question, enabling a "service network" to be put in place. Usually based on an approach borrowed from social services, some form of "case management" or "family center" is put in place.

These approaches, however, appear to be premised on two significant assumptions. The first of these is that the school is essentially community based, so that family participation in social services is facilitated by spatial proximity. Extending this further, the school can acquire a greater legitimacy as a community center, creating a more supportive educational culture in the community. If, however, the school is not central to the community, the integration of services and legitimating issues are called into question.

The second assumption that is vital to the effective coordination of services is an expectation by the schools that they occupy the central role in the coordination of services. While this is an unproblematic assumption in many communities, there are empirical examples (noted below) of communities that are so isolated from the schools that serve them that the use of school-based support services is problematic. In some extreme situations, the school itself may adopt a perspective that the students from these communities generate problems for the remainder of the school. In these settings, educational supports, let alone social services, are difficult to introduce effectively within a school setting.

Examples of such settings abound. Rural school districts where impoverished communities depend on a network of busses to bring often impoverished students to a central place find it difficult to develop a school based program that incorporates family participation, when the literature on integrated services strongly suggests that this is necessary (Kirst & Kelley, 1992, 1995). Likewise, the discussion of the shifts in urban poverty suggests that racial and economic isolation are isolating many inner city communities from public institutions—such as schools—and creating both social and spatial barriers to effective educational programs (Yancey & Saporito, 1995; Wilson, 1989).

Educational Ecologies and Community Links

It is routine for schools to be seen as dependent upon supportive communities and involved families as they pursue their educational goals. It is important to recognize a more thoroughly embedded relationship between these three elements if we are to successfully define both a rationale and a specific form for a model of educational change. We would argue that the ideal typical school in an American community is one that assumes a close integration of shared community values and broad-based support from that community, hand in hand with families who are strongly involved in their children's education and participatory in that community. Few divisions are imagined within the school or the community, and families are relatively intact and unproblematic in their internal dynamics.

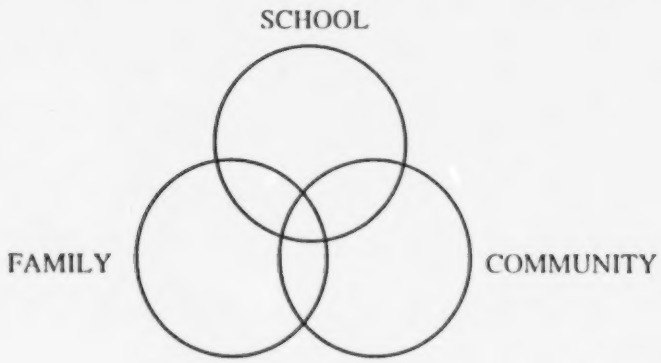
This model is utopian, almost by definition. The construction of an ideal type is the creation of an idealized exaggeration of empirical examples—in this case, the inverse of the problematic schools that the educational literature routinely prescribes. But we are not attempting to set up the straw man of an ill-suited ideal type, as no author we have reviewed thinks that this simplistic definition of a utopian system is within empirical reach. However, the strategies that are often discussed, especially in the service integration literature, proceed as if this model helped identify the deficits that social and family support services were designed to remedy (see Gordon, 1995, for a critical review of this approach).

We have provided a visual guide to both this idealized model and one that should guide our efforts better toward an empirically driven strategy for change. In Figure 1, top, we see an idealized, mutually supportive system of community based, family involved education, with school, family and community reinforcing one another's efforts. At the bottom, we would argue is a guideline for assessing school-community-family problems—a model that indicates an absence of supportive, and perhaps even operational, supports between the three elements.

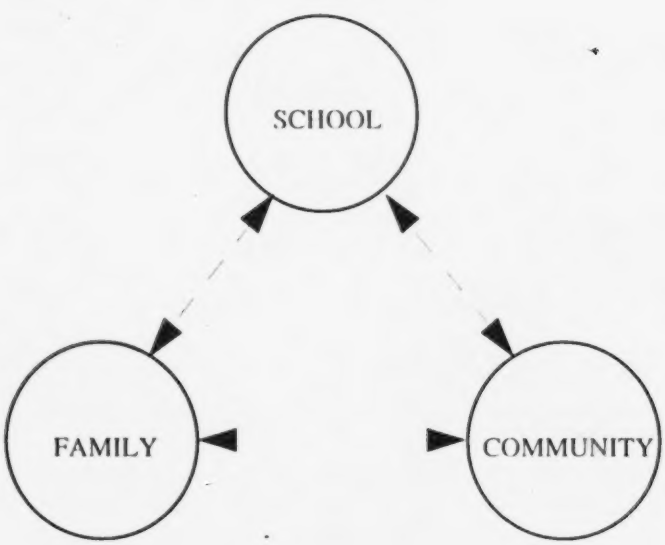
Figure 1

Contrasting Ecologies of School, Community, and Family

IDEALIZED EDUCATIONAL ECOLOGY



FRAGMENTED EDUCATIONAL ECOLOGY



The literature on the embedding of schools within a community-family relationship has been well documented (Yancey & Saporito, 1995, 1997; Peshkin, 1995; Bartelt, 1995). The findings of a host of studies, going back to the Coleman report, suggest that family support is key to educational success for the child, and that schools find it difficult, if not impossible, to make up for the lack of family supports. Furthermore, much of the literature on family resources suggests that these are dramatically influenced by community contexts, as are the fiscal and educational supports of schools.

When we seek to reduce this to a simplified model, we see that both internal and relational forces are affected. First, within each institutional sphere (represented by the three circles), there are ample opportunities for divisions and conflicts that create problems within each sphere. Thus, families may be a source of significant difficulties in supporting educational goals due to family conflict, inadequate material resources, pathologies among its membership, or simple instability. Communities may be so divided by race or class that education becomes another arena in which opportunity structures are reproduced to limit quality education. Schools may be so divided between faculty and students, or so entrenched in a tracking curriculum that education is neither thoroughly nor efficiently provided.

These internal divisions interfere with any effort to link family, home, and community in a child-centered approach to educational change. What emerges in much of the literature noted above, and is often implied in the coordination of services literature as well, are the significant disruptions in the relationship between these three key elements of educational success—school, family, and community. There are breaks in the mutual support system, as schools are rejected by some communities, even as the schools label groups of students "not ready" for school. Families can become hostile toward educational change, and schools may be separated from the realities of the contemporary family, simply as a function of a changing public policy environment (Gordon, 1995).

The position taken here is that community support for education is integral to educational success. When one examines the characteristics of effective schools, there are generally well institutionalized mechanisms for parental involvement combined with broad-based community support.

While these are not sufficient, in their own right, to foster educational success, they are, we argue, necessary components of educational success. Coordination of family and social support services needs to be driven by the empirically determined needs expressed within the school-community-family environment.

Most efforts to develop supportive professional services that complement educational efforts are discussed as school based, at least with respect to a referral system to easily accessible resources. Three major assumptions are made in this approach: (1) that these services are readily available to the school; (2) that family members will be willing to participate in any services that go beyond the child her/himself; and (3) that the school is central (both socially and spatially) to the community.

But what if we are working with a community that is physically separated from the school, and for which transportation is difficult? What if we are working with a community that has been socially identified within the school as a "problem" community that needs only "disciplinary" services applied to its children? What if we have a school in which a mixture of racial antipathy and class issues dilute existing parent-school ties? And what if we are working with a community that has been so isolated and programmatically shortchanged over the years that every external program is viewed with suspicion?

The argument advanced here is that any effort to bring about educational change in such a setting must begin with the realities facing the community itself, and build an effort for educational change that simultaneously addresses broader community needs. The community must mobilize for educational change, but is not likely to do so unless a broader, and more immediate change agenda is also at hand. The payoffs for educational change are long-term, at best. What we describe next is the process of building a community-based needs assessment and combining it with a list of available resources as one dimension of building the change agenda. Second, we discuss the mechanisms for organizing this community, a goal that is itself difficult.

The Setting

This model was developed in a particular school-community setting. Before we develop the model further, it is important to consider a few details about that site, the Passyunk Homes public housing project. As a recent paper describing the Passyunk experience details (Bartelt, 1998), the above listed circumstances are among the essential barriers facing any educational change effort with that community. At its most basic, Passyunk Homes exhibits little in the way of informal community ties or expectations that support an educational change objective, except in the most abstract and ritualized ways (i.e., education is seen as an important value, but going to school is not—especially when adolescence is reached). What is striking in Passyunk is the high cost of simply making it from day to day for most of the residents.

The roots of the issues facing Passyunk lie in the mixture of extreme poverty in the community, the community's spatial isolation from the city's institutional resources (including both its public housing bureaucracy and its schools), a long history of isolation and neglect within an imperfectly functioning housing authority, and a categorical, non-holistic approach to community needs. Passyunk Homes, in short, has deep community needs that interfere with anything resembling a normal family life, and absolutely interfere with a simple appeal to "life chances" as an educational strategy.

The community culture of Passyunk Homes is one of fear, apathy, and survival—fear of the physical, economic or housing consequences of complaining to or about Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) staff or tenant leadership; fear of drug related activities; apathy about one's neighbors, the future, or new programs; and a simple concern to make one's life from one day to the next, while continuing to navigate the one mile journey to the laundromat, or the several mile, several hour journey to the welfare check cashing agency. For students, it is a long journey across contested terrain, even for K-4th grade students, only to arrive at a school setting in which students and parents alike report that they are routinely written off.

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The Passyunk Homes project, symbolically, was never intended as permanent public housing. It was originally intended to be used temporarily for naval workers at the nearby naval shipyard, since demobilized. In the 1950s, the Department of Defense offered the buildings to the PHA, which subsequently discovered that the apartments did not meet Philadelphia minimum housing codes. After losing a precedent setting lawsuit (establishing that federal built facilities did not need to meet local codes in order to be transferred), the Housing Authority began to use the homes without bringing them up to code. They have been in service for more than 30 years, with their first retrofitting in 1997.

The Passyunk Homes project is located in extreme South Philadelphia. Until the 1960s, there was no housing further south of the project, and it is located on a triangle of land bounded by an expressway, a major access road to the airport, and a railroad viaduct. In addition, the project is located directly over an underground plume of petroleum by-products from nearby refineries, several of them known carcinogens. The plume is located between 4 and 15 feet under the surface; several of the workers report that they have successfully set the ground on fire at locations within the project. It is a physically isolated community, environmentally endangered, and an afterthought in the eyes of most PHA programs, we have discovered. (This latter fact was abruptly reversed when a former resident of the community, a professional basketball player, provided funding for a new recreation center provided there were some additional improvements made to the housing. Thus, over the past three years, a significant amount of effort has been put into physical improvements to the community.)

Building an Alternative

Perhaps the best way to begin developing a model of embedded educational change is to recognize that school-based models have strong limitations. While they offer a certain degree of certainty based on the control of a limited number of factors in a somewhat standardized setting, they also carry with them an implicit assertion that changes brought about in classrooms will successfully resist community- and family-based stressors. This appears to be a problematic assumption. Additionally,

when true service integration is tried, a major difficulty emerges: professional specialization often appears to inhibit communication across the educational and social service divide.

What we are left with is a strategy that may work in settings where there is already strong support for education and for the school as a community institution. What we need is a process that questions that assumption, and having identified a community in isolation from educational goals as well as its schools, devises an alternative to restore that key relationship in the school-family-community ecology.

It is, of course, entirely possible to devise a policy that "triages" such a circumstance. Many cities routinely minimize services to communities that they are convinced lack the wherewithal to survive or prosper. It is routine to suggest that these communities have no need for educational programs, since they do not support them with appropriate attitudes.

This actually helps me lay out one additional assumption of this model. This model does assume that mass public education is a fundamental policy commitment of the American public sector, and that to limit access to that is to consign communities to perpetuating cycles of socio-economic isolation. But this implies that we must open educational change models to be truly inter-disciplinary, and recognize the importance of mobilizing community resources as a part of a broad change agenda that will collaboratively improve educational and community resources.

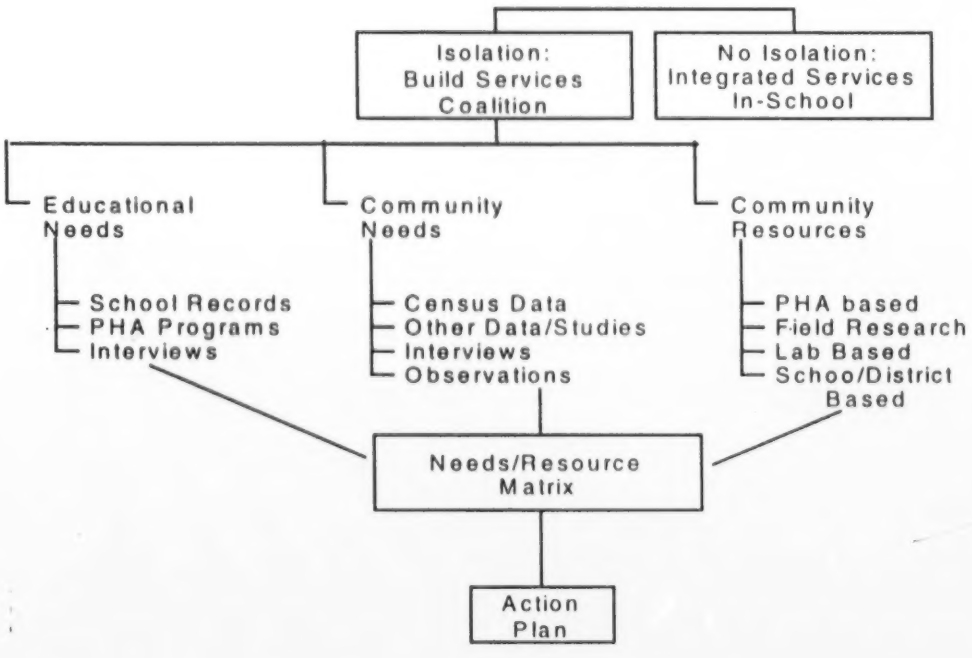
The process of assessment is diagrammed in figure 2, as a series of inquiries. In this model, four important stages should be recognized: (1) the *preliminary assessment* of isolation; (2) the *empirical* determination of *needs and resources*; (3) the development of a *summary matrix*; and (4) the development of an *action plan*. As can be seen from the diagram, we have indicated a series of data sources from which needs and resources were developed. We will provide a sample matrix for discussion purposes, as well as a proposed action plan that incorporates the community organizing model discussed earlier in this report.

Preliminary Assessment

The first step in the chart is the initial inquiry we have alluded to above: Is this community a good candidate for an integrated services approach, or does it better fit a community mobilization approach? The initial information to address this question came from Philadelphia Housing Authority interviews, site visits to Passyunk Homes, and from School District of Philadelphia data, supplemented by several initial interviews with residents at PHA. The key elements that suggested isolation were the following: the nearest elementary school is .9 mile from the mid-point of the project, over 1 mile from the furthest point within the Passyunk community. Two 6-7 lane roads needed to be crossed, and the School District had suspended bus service because of its expense. While the PHA provided a bus, students who missed it faced the same walk. (Subsequent observations revealed a large number of students being walked to school.)

Figure 2

Tasks for Community Based Education Initiatives



The primary school contained a student body that was half Passyunk residents and half other residents from communities not socially or spatially proximate to Passyunk. Students and parents reported a labeling process, and the school liaison officer for Passyunk was the school disciplinary officer. In our preliminary meetings with PHA personnel, they revealed another issue that bore upon school success: public health. Because of a report released by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the issue of environmental toxins was raised in our discussions. While there had been a medical clinic on site in previous years, there was no such facility present. We were also informed that tenants who received welfare checks needed to travel to 5th and Washington Avenue, a roughly four mile journey on three

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modes of public transit, if they wanted to receive and cash their welfare check. We also noted that the nearest shopping facilities were located over one mile from the Passyunk community.

Taken in their entirety, it was decided that Passyunk was more likely a community in need of comprehensive, community-based change strategies, and that school-based services would, at the least, be overwhelmed by the other issues confronting the community. Accordingly, the project moved to the second stage, placing a community ethnographer within the community to determine both community needs and community resources.

Needs and Resources

As reflected in figure 2, there are really three tasks involved, detailing both educational and community needs, as well as determining available resources. These are each discussed briefly, in turn, suggesting mechanisms of obtaining the needed information. It should be noted at the outset of this discussion that it was strongly felt that the project should rely on an ethnographic approach to develop information about community needs, as well as to generate a more explicit set of educational issues from students and their parents.

Educational: Educators are probably quite familiar with the use of available records and standardized testing, as well as classroom observations, to determine the type, scope, and scale of educational needs for a given student or set of students. The approach used here looks for patterns of scores at a school-wide level (within each grade). That is, the data obtained from the primary school (grades K-4) that served the majority of Passyunk children showed a clear pattern of under-achievement in both math and literacy scores for that school (see the appended school reports, Appendix A). These data do not, by themselves, indicate that the Passyunk community accounts for the student test scores in that school; they do, however, account for the high concentration of poverty in the school, and according to parental reactions, poor performance on report cards and in observed difficulties in reading.

Subsequent interviews with one teacher's aide, and some two dozen parents indicated a significant break in the relationship between family members and the school. There appears to be little

routine involvement of parents with either a parents' association or with school meetings. In part, these feelings were elicited when the specific subject of school performance was brought up in discussions between the ethnographer and community respondents discussing their children, and in part voluntarily stated when the general subject of the schools was discussed. There is a general feeling that students are not well served by the school, but this is not backed up by specific narratives that detail particular learning problems. This issue is discussed more broadly below.

Originally, the research design of the project involved within-school observations of classes and school behavior. Because there was significant turnover in the administrative staff of the school, combined with district-wide restructuring efforts, it was strategically decided to study and work with the community first, and engage the school and the School District during the Fall, 1997 term. This proved impossible, as the project was terminated at that point. Rather than developing false expectations over the commitment of resources that would not be forthcoming, we did not develop this relationship.

In a fully fleshed out approach, of course, the approach would have been to discuss the specific educational issues that were present with the teaching, professional and administrative staff of the school. In particular, we would have been able to ascertain the degree of "labeling" of the Passyunk children that was taking place; the degree to which they were being "tracked" for non-academic futures; and the degree to which the educational problems might well be pervasive to the school itself, and not targeted to the Passyunk community.

Once these issues were determined, it would be possible to develop a set of educational needs (as well as resources—see Table 1) for the needs/resource matrix that is the goal of this overall process.

Community: Typically, any strategy that seeks to empirically determine community needs can derive its data from three sources: (1) a standardized survey of some sort that is adapted and applied to a community's residents; (2) data derived from census or other third party sources; and (3) qualitative field work, using an ethnographic approach.

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Resources: This model adopts an approach to community development best articulated by John McKnight, who describes a process of "asset mapping" as an alternative to the tendency to stigmatize communities in need by examining them as if they contained only deficits (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In his approach, pioneered in the communities of Chicago, the community organizer's role is not to simply catalog problems, but to use the organizing process to engage communities in defining the assets that they control within their own boundaries.

First and foremost, of course, is the ability of neighborhoods to form a social relationship that is geared toward a common goal. Churches, community organizations, youth groups and the like often co-exist with otherwise hostile conditions. This was certainly the case in Passyunk, where we were able to target a significant number of organizations and active community members who would have been the logical partners in the community development-educational change project in that community (Bartelt, 1998).

The Needs/Resources Matrix

If we think about needs and resources as two sides of a rectangular grid, we can facilitate the planning process by schematically laying out how available resources can be applied to existing needs, as well as the areas in which resources are currently absent. The following summary, based on Passyunk Homes data, gives an indication of how both educational and education-related community needs can be laid out in such a grid. Table 1 provides the basis for making important decisions about a plan for action.

Table 1
Needs/resource Matrix

		Literacy	Math	Toxins	Drugs	Violence	Rec'tion	Etc....
R	School	X	X					
E	School District	X	X					
S	PHA Hsng.					X	X	
O	Tenant's Council							
U	PHA Anti-Drug				X			
R	Anti-Violence					X		
C	EPA-DEP			X				
E	DHS-Agencies							X
S	Etc....							

Action Plan

Given a set of needs and a set of resources, a normal planning effort would proceed to prioritize these needs, establish these as goals with incremental steps, and acquire the needed resources to accomplish these goals. This model assumes both direct access to resources, and is most often associated with "top-down" models of change within a relatively well-structured organization. It is a model that has tended to be associated with "learning organizations" that try to develop a sense of responsiveness to an *external* set of forces that can be capricious, arbitrary, and beyond easy control (Senge, 1993).

Implicit in the approach we have developed here, however, is a sense that multiple human organizations are involved with effective schooling, from family, to community institutions, to the schools themselves. While Senge's (and others') arguments are persuasive within a district undergoing reform or restructuring, they ultimately depend on a centralized source of authority that defends and advances a change agenda within *one* organization. The research we were able to complete during the

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first year of the project suggested that this approach did not fit either the deeply entrenched patterns of education within the Philadelphia School District, nor of family expectations/desires for their children. Further, there appeared to be active forces within the community that would need to be recruited into addressing educational change agendas rather than more narrow economic and political agendas.

In short, what is needed is both a specification of actions derived from the community needs/resources matrix, and a community organizing effort that seeks broad-based changes facilitating educational improvement. For the purposes of this model, the term "community practice" is used. Community practice is an adaptive extension of traditional community organizing, using community mobilization techniques to develop human resources and existing organizational resources in a coalition for change. In this instance, the model suggests that simply proposing an iterative set of steps for educational change is insufficient. The family and community components of effective education must be re-recruited and re-integrated into an educational process that is itself adaptable to change. This section focuses on both the community organizing and specific strategies for change that would be likely to emerge from a continuation of the Passyunk project, but will also contain examples of situations where this approach appears to have been effectively applied.

It is impossible to begin this type of project without recognizing the contingent nature of any attempt to mobilize communities—especially low income, isolated neighborhoods. This approach to community change is a contemporary extension of community organizing (Alinsky, 1969, 1971). In particular, it looks to basic principles of community work, as well as case studies of communities that have limited resources and are "anomic" in nature—communities that have been so separated from economic and political assets that their organizing effort is a part of the process of empowerment (Warren & Warren, 1977).

Coalition Building—The Community as Client: The community organizing model that is familiar to many human services professions is not necessarily a part of educational change efforts. In order to be used in developing service partnerships, the community itself must be seen as the client, and

its needs as a basis for collaborative resource development across its institutions. The contrast between the approaches is apparent, as follows. (Professionals who are familiar with the emergence of community practice as an extension of community organizing can easily skip this section and move on to discussion of the *Action Plan*, p. 15.)

Community Practice: The form of community organizing most familiar to academics is based on the work of Saul Alinsky and the Industrial Areas Foundation. This tradition begins with an assumption that most neighborhoods are excluded from the arenas of power within which the decisions that affect their lives are routinely made. When communities decide to mobilize, it is with the intent of leveraging resources to produce change in some way that tangibly improves the normal lives of neighborhood residents. The model assumes that resource allocations have vested interests associated with them, and that to reallocate these resources is to enter into (potentially) a conflict over their use.

Alinsky's approach has been historically oriented toward conflict, but also strategically involves confrontation tactics and attempts to publicly embarrass those from whom they would seek resources. This approach seeks to build on tactical successes, and to develop a community based organization (CBO) to further the area's interests. While Alinsky always defended the earlier, oppositional character of his organizing strategies, his later work with the Industrial Areas Foundation, emphasized a more pragmatic approach that combined partnerships and collaboration as CBO strategies.

As Alinsky's influence grew in community organizing circles, and as the literature of case studies on the successes of alternative approaches grew (see Reitzes & Reitzes, 1987), there was a growing recognition in the applied social sciences and social welfare fields that (1) not all problems could be reduced to power conflicts, (2) that the resources for change could often be found within the community; and (3) that the barriers to effective change were often found in overly narrow definitions of self-interest within the social service organizations that were present within communities.

In simplistic terms, Alinsky painted a picture of a socially cohesive community already galvanized by a problem generated by an outside force, and using a variety of tactics to stop the problem

from occurring. Increasingly, organizers found themselves reporting difficulties in holding together fragile alliances within very mixed communities, while confronting complex problems, such as persistent poverty or institutional racism, that resisted rapid social change. Many also asked, essentially, how do communities survive and change, working with the organizational resources it already has?

A Collaborative Model of Community Change: Corresponding to the shift in political tactics that has accompanied other arenas, community organizing can no longer rely on public sense of morality to achieve their goals. CBOs must be more collaborative, less strident, and more effective in their partnerships if community organizing is to be successful in shifting resources from one direction to another, or even if it is to incorporate a traditionally excluded community into existing service delivery systems. One such approach, which we might term "collaborative" in its focus (Rosenthal & Cairns, 1994), provides a basis for our synthesis, both in its approach to coalition building, and in its close thematic thrust of child welfare. They address both the issue of jurisdictional claims as well as community participation in their unique approach. They see the community as a complex interplay of political and social service organizations, along with the informal networks and community organizations of churches, families, schools and the like. In our terms, this ecology can be addressed by a "model of service delivery . . . implemented utilizing both the political and social services contexts of communities as integral components for supporting and enhancing family life, thus making the community a co-worker" in the child abuse prevention effort (Rosenthal & Cairns, 1994, p.48).

Communities mobilizing for change, regardless of their goal, approach problem areas facing three sub-problems. First, they need to overcome the inertia associated with present patterns of behavior. In terms of education, the community must decide that the current practices, whatever they are, are not succeeding. Once that is accomplished, the second component of the change process emerges: defining the problem and assessing the roots of that problem. This is followed by the development of an effective strategy, based on whatever collaborative processes available in an effort to build an effective coalition.

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We argue that the problems facing many urban communities (including Passyunk Homes) are so entwined with one another that an effective educational change strategy must be part of a systematic, broad, inter-service, effort to address children's needs. Such approaches should expect to mesh children's educational reforms with organizing around improved adult literacy and other forms of continuing adult education, family services, anti-violence initiatives, labor force and job development programs, recreation, and public health or housing improvement as supportive measures, depending on what the community needs are. In this more collaborative approach, there will undoubtedly still be instances of organizational competition. The project must continue to focus on the ecology of forces affecting children, and develop a coalition of forces to address this.

The Action Plan, from Assessment to Intervention

As a model, this approach shares key elements with the basic principles Alinsky espoused for organizers: it is pragmatic, responsive to community defined needs, develops community controlled resources, and identifies a strategy for change. There is support for this model from the literature on coordination of family and children's services, as well as a significant set of guidelines from within the community organizing literature. The collaborative approach has also been linked to the "resource mobilization" perspective within the social movements literature. Regardless of perspective used, this model argues that effective social change is not necessarily accomplished with a formulaic approach.

At this point, we can only describe the process as it would work with the model we have described, as the actual Passyunk project is at a hiatus. A community practice approach would begin the planning process at this point by beginning a three-stage process of mobilization: Identify the Client, Set Priorities, and Define the Strategy.

Identify the Client: It is apparent from the field studies completed at Passyunk that neither PHA nor the Tenants Association would be effective clients. The PHA is too powerful a force, and too fragmented in its programmatic experiences for tenant household to easily develop a working partnership. Similarly, there are thinly veiled accusations of patronage, graft, and retaliation that have

emerged in talking about the existing tenant council leadership. There are, however, several instances in which activities involving residents in the community have coalesced around the new recreation center, administered by the city's Department of Recreation.

Various after school activities, including a basketball league, and a boy scout troop, have emerged at the center. Given the failure of PHA to maintain funding for its sole after-school activity, this may well represent the only point of insertion for a community organizer. The Department of Recreation would need to be contacted to permit an organizer to work out of this center, and to allow the use of the center as a basis for community schooling (see below). The true client would be a group of residents who would respond to the organizer's outreach efforts in developing a community school, i.e., a coordinated set of educational and social services within the community, using education as the key principle for development. It should also be noted that this strategy has been explicitly adopted in Milwaukee's midnight basketball program, where it is linked to issues of adult literacy and job recruitment.

Set Priorities: Three recurring messages emerged from discussions with community members: environmental health; literacy; and linkage to the public schools and other public services. These acquire priority among the needs to be addressed. Given the omnipresent social isolation that emerged from many discussions, this last item is not surprising; given the apathy that is often assumed for the community, the first is somewhat morose. We would propose working with the community residents to develop the following programs as community education efforts based at the recreation center, and linked to educational improvements.

Define the Strategy: Assuming that the recreation center will focus as the point of attack, and assuming that we would work with existing programs rather than take on the additional cost of developing new programs, we would identify the following instrumental tasks as central toward a community school strategy for Passyunk Homes.

- Extend current Department of Environmental Protection information efforts to include regular reports to the Passyunk community at the center, and establish an environmental notification system at the recreation center that would inform residents of the progress in addressing the underground petrochemical plume beneath the project.
- This informational approach should be complemented by public health initiative, using the Allegheny University field training/service learning model, aimed at the medical screening of young children and adolescents.
- Develop both child and adult literacy programs that are linked to the school curriculum at Bregy School. It is particularly important to note that many housing project interventions have established that effective children's literacy is facilitated by having an adult reader in the household.
- Establish a presence of the Philadelphia School District within Passyunk Homes. A prime consideration of the organizing effort is establishing a linkage between the community and the school that serves most of the younger children in the community. Depending on school and/or district resources, some form of after-school program aimed at increased parental involvement would be appropriate—even to the extent of having Home and School Association meetings within Passyunk.
- Equally evident in the conversations with Passyunk residents was a profound degree of physical and social isolation of the community. The organizer should be concerned with identifying targets of opportunity among social service and community agencies to develop other means to link Passyunk to the external community (welfare and public assistance, welfare to work and other job training programs, general public health clinics, and public transportation come immediately to mind).

Conclusion: Putting the Model in the Field

At this point, the model has been developed, and a set of strategies devised to put a community based, integrated services model into place at Passyunk Homes, using principles of community practice as a vehicle to assist the process. The problem facing this project is that it marks a departure from conventional thinking about the integration of services in assisting educational outcomes. While several educational interventions exist that are placed within housing projects (see Appendix B), the more comprehensive, community development model is not as well known.

We would suggest two approaches that have been developed and which show promise of transferability to the Passyunk setting. The first of these is located in Seattle, Washington, and is known as *Project LOOK*. The Highline School District has developed linkages between three low income housing projects and nearby schools to provide so-called "apartment schools." Several housing units have been converted to use as an educational facility, where the school district provides homework assistance, tutoring, computer training, social skills development, a snack or hot meal, health screening,

and counseling. Family supports are also provided by linkage or referrals to domestic violence support services; public health nurses; parenting classes; GED and ESL classes; and job, computer and citizenship training courses (McGeehan, 1998).

In another setting, a Texas A & M program has worked on education centered community development in the *colonias* communities along the Texas-Mexico border (Black, 1998). While these communities are usually thought of as rural, they are located on the fringes of larger communities, but offer low-cost housing to their residents (as well as easy access for emigration to the United States). In these *colonias*, pressing sanitation (open sewage drain-off) and public health needs joust with social services and educational outreach efforts for center stage.

The Texas A & M program uses a community development model that develops complementary partnerships among educational, social service, and public health needs. The key to understanding this strategy is the concept of isolation. Just as in Passyunk, it is not the community conditions *per se* that must be addressed, but the isolation of each *colonia* from the others, and from any state- or county-based program efforts at remediation. The strategy adopted in these communities was to either build or rehabilitate a community center that would serve as the mobilizing center for multiple services.

In addition, women living within the *colonias* have been hired to act as community intermediaries—as *promotoras* of the community center/community development approach. As they provide information to their community about the services that are available, they also are the first point of contact for the community, and can communicate the needs of the *colonias* with greater immediacy. As of the end of 1997, nine centers have been developed, and handle over 29,000 cases per month across diverse entities that provide education, health, human services, community development, youth, elderly, housing, and community development outreach.

These two applications of the general model suggest that a similar approach can be adapted to the specifics of communities in a variety of settings. To achieve a "community school," one needs to combine a perspective that is community oriented, sees education as a fundamental component of

community development, and that works within a community framework to deliver educational services and supportive activities.

Appendix A

Table A1
Basic Enrollment Data, Bregy School

	1993-94	1994-95	1996
Number	768	681	466
Minority	76.6%	80.1%	89.1%
Low Income	84.2%	84.8%	89.8%
Avg. Attend.	89.5%	89.9%	NA

Table A2
Performance Data, School District Standardized Measures, for Bregy and South Philadelphia Cluster Schools

		Bregy	S. Phila.
SAT-9	**Reading**	48.6	61.3
	Math	50.2	50.9
	Science	50.2	49.8
Promotion		86.5	82.8
Attendance	**Student**	82.5	79.6
	Staff	83.8	89.0
Growth Target	**Achieved**	4.4	5.5
	Shortfall	1.6	1.8
Summary Reading	**Below Basic III**	13.8	18.8
	Below Basic II	24.6	12.0
	Below Basic I	13.8	6.5
	Not Tested	15.4	12.7
Summary Math	**Below Basic III**	23.1	22.2
	Below Basic II	29.2	19.6
	Below Basic I	9.2	7.5
	Not Tested	10.8	18.3
Summary Science	**Below Basic III**	27.7	19.6
	Below Basic II	20.0	19.0
	Below Basic I	10.8	8.6
	Not Tested	12.3	18.9

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The following points suggest themselves:

1. Enrollments are declining at Bregy, while the concentration of minority students (98% of whom are African American) is increasing.
2. While all of the South Philadelphia cluster schools have problems with mathematics and science test scores, there is a marked literacy problem at Bregy—roughly a 20% difference in average test scores between Bregy and the cluster average.
3. Despite these test differences, there is a higher promotion rate and higher attendance level at Bregy as opposed to the cluster schools, but these are relatively low magnitude differences.
4. The expanded distribution of test scores in reading, math, and science clearly identifies reading ability as a critical intervention area. The largest clumping of Bregy students is two levels below minimal acceptance levels for the district, with almost 1/4 of the students in this category alone.
5. The difficulties in reading, we would argue, are carried over into the lower test scores demonstrated in both math and science.

Appendix B:
Examples of Linked Practices

This project has been assisted in its vision by the many case studies of establishing community-based efforts at education, across a variety of different contexts. What follows is a brief discussion of some of these projects, so that educators and community organizers alike may gain some insight into the breadth of strategies that are available. Perhaps the most clearly stated position is one accompanying an analysis of an effective midnight basketball league in Milwaukee (Farrell, Johnson, Sapp, Pumphrey, & Freeman, 1996). The authors maintain that the use of a recreational program that is accepted in the community as a means of establishing linkages to adult education and other counseling/support services was a key to the success of these latter efforts.

By using a community-based vehicle, rather than establishing a "paternalistic (or) punitive public policy," access to social resources are improved (Farrell et al., 1996, pp. 104-105). The authors specifically cite the absence of "mediating" institutions—"clubs, churches, community organizations and the like" (Farrell et al., 1996, pp. 104-105) as key to accessing resources in non-impoverished communities. The role of community organizing in achieving an immediate goal, and using that success as a means of introducing a community development agenda is nowhere more clearly articulated. Other examples are also provided here.

Education Based Efforts at Addressing the Family and Community Contexts of Educational Problems

Lisbeth Schorr has been perhaps the most compelling author to make the case for the integration of urban policies to address educational needs (1994). As she puts it, she has been working at the intersection between health services, social services, family and community supports and the schools. She presents three premises for the success of such a strategy. They are presented in their entirety below (Schorr, 1994, p. 222):

- First, if a child is to succeed at school, whole communities must take responsibility for supporting their children as they nurture their children and for helping each child's school success. School success must become the goal of every system, not just of the schools.
- Second, the partnership between schools and parents and community agencies must be experienced by schools and school personnel as part of the solution, not just as one more burden they are being asked to bear.
- Third, improving outcomes for children means going beyond forging better linkages and coordination between schools and human services.

For Schorr, successful interventions must be "comprehensive, intensive, flexible and responsive" (Schorr, 1994, p. 225). Children need to be seen as parts of families, and families as parts of neighborhoods and communities, while the staff of collaborative agencies must have the time, skills and support to build relationships of trust and support with the children and their families. Further, any such effort needs to be long-term and preventative in orientation, evolving over time.

While Schorr goes on to argue for specific mechanisms for change, her general thrust does not deviate from these points. The bottom line is to reconstruct traditional bureaucratic boundaries so that there is a shared interest in the welfare of the child. We refer the interested reader to Wang, Haertel, Walberg (1995) for a good review article on the effectiveness of these strategies, as well as Dolan (1995) and Zetlin (1995) for additional examples.

In an earlier work, but which is based on many of Schorr's arguments, Levy (1989) cited Schorr in noting that complex problems call for comprehensive services to the whole person and his or her community. Levy calls for an end of the categorization of human services and education, as they have overlapping administrative responsibilities and are mutually dependent on one another (Liontos, 1990).

Kirst (1994), suggest specific strategies that build on linking services to address the common needs found by schools in addressing Chapter 1 students. Their working definition of school-linked services (SLS) is as follows:

> . . . an interagency system linking schools and local public and private human service agencies with the support of business, higher education and other community resources. This system is designed to meet the inter-related educational, social, and psychological needs of children. SLS

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empowers parents to better tailor and consume public and private systems (Kirst & Kelley, 1992, p. 9).

Kirst (1994) suggest that there are a variety of models possible, and that approaches need to be flexible in their conception. The services need not be *at* a school, but are suggested to be nearby, open lengthy hours, and ideally inclusive of the following programs or services:

- parental education/adult education
- after school recreational programs
- nurse practitioner/health programs
- mental health facilities
- on-site welfare assistance
- collaboration with probation and/or job training programs
- Boys Clubs, Boy Scouts, and other youth service groups

The authors also cite significant barriers to the implementation of such a program, including funding, space, governance, confidentiality issues across programs, and staff training.

The authors have subtly changed one of the terms of the argument for coordination of children's' services, and we should be clear in identifying that shift. By making the school the central element in the description of service coordination, and by making school outcomes the key to the coordination of services, they differ from Schorr's argument, which places the whole child at the center of the discussion. By arguing that school performance is the key issue, Kirst (1994) place organizational primacy for locating the services and establishing their priority as educational in nature. We are concerned that this will create difficulties in "turf" discussions, for one, as agencies will feel that they are being placed in service to a competing sector in the human services/education field.

In a related critique, Gordon (1995) has argued that the inherent incrementalism and instrumentalism of school-based collaborations understates the degree to which American society as a whole is being transformed. We tend to limit our discussions of public policy in this arena to the more easily accomplished goals of limited, school-based interventions. His critique also makes the implicit argument that the constraints that are placed upon schools by the factors of racial and income inequality

will certainly inhibit their ability to be the primary actor in countering these effects. For Gordon, and for this project, the focus must be on the whole child. We would further maintain that an effort at community mobilization around children's well being allows for a more productive merger of social and educational services.

Perhaps more to the point, we will be arguing in our discussion of Passyunk Homes that the socio-spatial separation of the community from the school makes this an impractical and self-defeating choice as well. Indeed, in reviewing Driscoll et al. (1997) discussion of service integration, we were struck by the degree to which they were dealing with a relatively cohesive model of both communities and social/educational services. To use but one example, the Department of Human Services (DHS) in Philadelphia need not take into account the educational impacts of relocating a child from its family or foster care situation. This strong division of responsibility for the child's welfare, and extraordinary powers of DHS, suggests a much less sanguine relationship between the agencies than we observe in Driscoll et al. (1997) examples.

These points of concern aside, there is beginning to be substantial literature supporting the principle of integrated services and school, family, and community partnerships. These are statements of principle, in the main, derived from prior research on the intersection of these factors with school success (Edwards, Jones, & Young, 1992; Epstein, 1990; Davies, 1991; Epstein & Dauber, 1991). The issue that remains is one of agency: who takes the initiative in developing such a strategy, and are they able to surrender turf without simultaneously surrendering authority?

Cases From the Public Housing Literature

Rickman and Gordon (1994) provide us with a baseline understanding of the problems typically faced within a public housing community. In a survey of both rural and urban public housing residents, they provide a familiar list of problems that often interfere with both family welfare and children's' educational outcomes. Their list includes both unemployment and underemployment, drug abuse, crime, severe poverty and family violence. They also suggest that while existing programs are not adequate to

the scale of the job, education (especially GED), crime prevention, family wellness, and youth recreation programs are the major assets available to address these problems.

A fundamental change in policy direction has characterized the anti-poverty programs of the country since 1993. Both the enterprise zone and public housing programs have come to adopt a "community building" approach (Naparstek, Dooley, Smith, & The Urban Institute/Aspen Systems Corporation, 1997, p. 2) as the basis for their programmatic decisions. This approach is one that fights poverty by building social and human capital. "It is an asset oriented, people based approach that supports people in poor neighborhoods as they rebuild social structures and relationships that may have been weakened by decades of outmigration, disinvestment and isolation."

It is clear from this document, and from the many programmatic efforts that have arisen in the past five years, that there is a commitment in principle, at least, to incorporating the lessons of community practice into housing and community development policy. Consider the seven points Naparstek, Dooley, Smith, & The Urban Institute/Aspen Systems Corporation (1997) list as central to a community-building approach:

- Involve residents in setting goals and strategies
- Begin with an awareness of assets, as well as problems in the community
- Work in communities of manageable size
- Tailor unique strategies for each neighborhood
- Maintain a holistic view of service delivery
- Reinforce community values while building human and social capital
- Develop creative partnerships with institutions in the city

The Naparstek report goes on to reference a variety of initiatives that have taken place within public housing communities. Hartford, CT, and its Charter Oaks program were cited specifically as a model for other cities to follow. These will be vital in addressing the community needs cited by Passyunk residents, as they deal with public safety, family support services, education, and job skills and training issues.

This strategy is reflected in a review of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) residential management system in public housing (ICF, 1992). In reviewing the several trials of tenant management

then in effect, ICF argued that the keys to programmatic success are as follows: build strong community organizations, nurture future leaders, equip residents with necessary skills, develop flexible federal rules and regulations on site, and develop a strong working relationship between the local housing authority and the tenant management group.

Other projects that have taken place within public housing sites are of interest as well. Horton and Zacharakis-Jutz (1995) report that using participatory research projects as a part of an adult education program led to significant increases in group cohesion, to the point that traditional "patronage" leaders at the project, and the housing authority itself became a problem, as they resisted an expansion of the program. Lebanon, Pennsylvania developed a peer advocacy training program for parents of Title I and other special needs students to develop advocacy skills vis-a-vis the local school district (1987). This appeared to be an effective program as it empowered parents beyond simple educational needs. In a more traditional model, Steele (1992) developed a series of support services for students from a public housing project. School based, it used a special counseling center for disruptive children (called the Viking Center), Newstart, for students seeking educational supports, and a parents' center for greater parental involvement. The behavioral control, the center for disruptive children, was viewed as having moderate success, with both Newstart and the parent's center having only a slight affect due to low participation rates.

Watkins (1993) in an earlier study, reported successful interventions in at least one city, as Yakima, WA developed a building trades pre-professional program within one of the city's housing projects, while Minneapolis and Leech Lake, MN housing projects also developed youth employment and child care programs respectively. At the other end of the age spectrum, George (1993) developed a more effective Head Start program by demonstrating that the school practices and community expectations were out of synch. She redesigned the project along similar strands as the HUD argument earlier, building around three principles: success for all children, serving the whole child, and the shared responsibility for the child across family, school and community agencies.

But the most ambitious project to involve an integrated perspective and community practice tenets is that of the "Beethoven Project" (Ounce of Prevention Fund, 1995). The project is named after the elementary school serving six of the buildings in the Robert Taylor Homes in South Chicago. The Beethoven school is located away from the Taylor Homes, and enrolls many other students. The school reported that many of the students began school at Beethoven with either behavioral problems or with great need for pre-reading readiness. These factors created significant learning difficulties within school classes, such that school-ready students were penalized by the time and energy that was demanded by a significant number of Taylor Homes children.

The Ounce of Prevention Fund established an integrated, comprehensive early childhood program within the Taylor Homes project in an effort to directly address the problem of school readiness. This program is called the Center for Successful Child Development, and occupies one floor in one of the six buildings located in the Beethoven catchment zone. Previously, the floor had been empty for five years; it took two years to secure and renovate the premises. The project offices are located on the floor, staffed by neighborhood residents, while the program itself consists of five elements:

- Parent-child advocates (PCAs), trained residents of Taylor Homes who work in all of the buildings and to coordinate family services;
- A family enrichment center, responsible for parenting, books, toys, and advice on child-rearing;
- A health care clinic, covering pre-natal, post-natal, well-baby, disease prevention and intervention, as well as reproductive health services;
- An infant-toddler center for day care, open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.;
- A full day Head Start program, coupled with child care services for 2-3 year old children.

The evaluation of the program yielded mixed results. On the one hand, participants were very satisfied, and the program had clear demonstrable effects on those who participated. The program, however, because it was crossing so many different agency and programmatic lines, ran into problems. Key among these was the difficulty in articulating a relationship with Children and Family Services, the child welfare agency in Chicago, and persistent difficulties in communicating across racial and class lines. The family enrichment center was not able to be routinized into families' lives, as it was most often used

as a "crash pad" for mothers seeking a break. While used routinely by many families at the outset of the program, use of the health center declined over time, although there is some evidence that basic care techniques were learned by many users. PCAs, a valuable resource in introducing and recruiting families to the center, were often approached to extend their skills beyond their job definitions, such as to obtain transit tokens or emergency food for tenants. That the PCAs went along with this suggests that there were many additional role issues between PCAs and the community in Taylor Homes.

By far the most significant barrier to the program was the unanticipated increase in the role of violence in the day to day life of the Taylor Homes, and in the staff of the center. The report suggests that staff turnover, anxiety levels of residents and staff, and the actual physical consequences of the violence presented a dimension of day to day life that had not been either anticipated nor programmatically addressed. In terms that foreshadow our description of Passyunk Homes, Taylor Homes is described as being a part of a "lonely stretch on Chicago's South Side cut off from other neighborhoods by one of the busiest interstates in the city" (Ounce of Prevention Fund, 1995).

The evaluation closes with seven rules for successful programs operating on this model and in similar areas.

1. Successful programs must earn participants' trust, and this takes time
2. The environment is not passive: it challenges both families and programs
3. Programs must respond to basic needs:
   a) housing safety and disrepair
   b) lack of food, milk, clothing, and furniture
   c) laundry facilities
   d) transportation costs
4. Value personal expressions of change
5. Program evaluation needs to be flexible, as complex programs in complicated settings require nuanced evaluations
6. New programs need breathing space, not an immediate expectation of results
7. Intractable issues can not be wished away
   a) crime/violence
   b) drugs
   c) diversity within the community

The Beethoven project suggests the advantages of a comprehensive and integrated model of intervention. It also suggests that an intervention program that is "imposed" from outside without a

significant amount of community practice—of buy-in from the larger community—will have limited effects.

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The Laboratory for Student Success

The Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) is one of ten regional educational laboratories in the nation funded by the U.S. Department of Education to revitalize and reform educational practice in the service of children and youth.

The mission of the Laboratory for Student Success is to strengthen the capacity of the mid-Atlantic region to enact and sustain lasting systemic educational reform through collaborative programs of applied research and development and services to the field. In particular, the LSS facilitates the transformation of research-based knowledge into useful tools that can be readily integrated into the educational reform process both regionally and nationally. To ensure a high degree of effectiveness, the work of the LSS is continuously refined based on feedback from the field on what is working and what is needed in improving educational practice.

The ultimate goal of the LSS is the formation of a connected system of schools, parents, community agencies, professional organizations, and institutions of higher education that serves the needs of all students and is linked with a high-tech national system for information exchange. In particular, the aim is to bring researchers and research-based knowledge into synergistic coordination with other efforts for educational improvement led by field-based professionals.

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